

TABLE 6 Recommended classification of chronic urticaria

Chronic Urticaria Subtypes	
Chronic Spontaneous Urticaria (CSU)	Inducible Urticaria
Spontaneous appearance of wheals, angioedema, or both for >6 weeks due to known ^a or unknown causes.	Symptomatic dermographism ^b Cold urticaria ^c Delayed pressure urticaria ^d Solar urticaria Heat urticaria ^e Vibratory angioedema ^f Cholinergic urticaria Contact urticaria Aquagenic urticaria

Note: Chronic urticaria (CU) is classified as spontaneous (CSU) and inducible (CIndU). CSU comes as CSU with known cause and CSU with unknown cause. CIndU is further subclassified as symptomatic dermographism, cold urticaria, delayed pressure urticaria, solar urticaria, heat urticaria, and vibratory angioedema (collectively referred to as chronic physical urticaria), as well as cholinergic urticaria, contact urticaria, and aquagenic urticaria. CU patients can have more than one form of CU including more than one form of CIndU and they often do.

Table is based on expert consensus and achieved ≥90% agreement in the consensus conference.

^aFor example, type I autoimmunity (autoallergy) and type IIb autoimmunity, with mast cell-activating autoantibodies

^bFormerly called *urticaria factitia* or dermographic urticaria.

^cAlso called cold contact urticaria.

^dAlso called pressure urticaria.

^eAlso called heat contact urticaria.

^fAlso called Vibratory angioedema/urticaria.

A A wheal has three typical features:

1. a sharply circumscribed superficial central swelling of variable size and shape, almost invariably surrounded by reflex erythema,
2. an itching or sometimes burning sensation,
3. a fleeting nature, with the skin returning to its normal appearance, usually within 30 min to 24 h.

B Angioedema is characterized by

1. a sudden, pronounced erythematous or skin-colored deep swelling in the lower dermis and subcutis or mucous membranes,
2. tingling, burning, tightness, and sometimes pain rather than itch,
3. a resolution slower than that of wheals (can take up to 72 h).

3.2 | Classification of urticaria on the basis of its duration and the relevance of eliciting factors

The spectrum of clinical manifestations of different urticaria types and subtypes is very wide. Additionally, two or more different subtypes of urticaria can coexist in any given patient.

Urticaria is classified based on its duration, as acute or chronic, and the role of definite triggers, as inducible or spontaneous. Acute

urticaria is defined as the occurrence of wheals, angioedema, or both for 6 weeks or less. Chronic urticaria is defined as the occurrence of wheals, angioedema, or both for more than 6 weeks. Chronic urticaria can come with daily or almost daily signs and symptoms or an intermittent/recurrent course. CSU may recur after a months or years of full remission.

Inducible urticaria is characterized by definite and subtype-specific triggers of the development of wheals, angioedema, or both. These triggers are definite because wheals, angioedema, or both always and never occur when the trigger is present and absent, respectively. These triggers are specific because each subtype of inducible urticaria has its relevant trigger, for example cold in cold urticaria, and this trigger is not relevant in other forms of inducible urticaria. Rare subtypes of inducible urticaria exist in which the combined presence of two or more definite and specific triggers is required for the induction of wheals, angioedema, or both, for example cold-induced cholinergic urticaria.¹²

Some patients with spontaneous urticaria experience trigger-induced wheals, angioedema, or both. These triggers are not definite, as their presence does not always induce signs and symptoms and because wheals, angioedema, or both also occur without them, that is, spontaneously. Some patients can present with more than one subtype of urticaria, which can also respond independently to treatment.